Pol 14 Viet S (1540)

Department of State **TELEGRAM**

CONFIDENTIAL 971

PAGE 01 SAIGON 13184 171107Z

12
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-06 H-02 INR-06 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01
PRS-01 SS-14 AID-20 RSR-01 /082 W
077939

O R 171036Z AUG 71
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8795
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG
USDEL FRANCE
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Izzberg DATE 1/26/82
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE _____
TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☑ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 13184

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: MINH DENIES HE WILL ESTABLISH OPPOSITION POLITICAL FORCE

1. SUMMARY: GENERAL MINH HAS OFFICIALLY DENIED THAT HE PROMISED KY TO WITHDRAW IF KY FAILED TO BE A CANDIDATE AND THAT HE WOULD ESTABLISH AN OPPOSITION POLITICAL FORCE AFTER THE ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. WHILE VISITING A GROUP OF FASTING BUDDHIST STUDENTS AUGUST 13 AT THE AN QUANG PAGODA, GENERAL DUONG VAN MINH TOLD REPORTERS THAT CONTRARY TO VICE PRESIDENT KY'S AUGUST 12 PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT, HE HAS NEVER PROMISED TO WITHDRAW FROM THE ELECTION IN THE EVENT KY IS NOT A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. MINH ALSO URGED THE STUDENT GROUP TO END THEIR PROTEST HUNGER STRIKE (WHICH THEY DID) AND MET WITH SENIOR AN QUANG MONKS, INCLUDING RECTOR THICH THIEN HOA AND THICH TRI QUANG.

3. IN A COMMUNIQUE RELEASED AUGUST 15 (AND SIGNED BY MINH'S SPOKESMAN DEPUTY NGUYEN HUU CHUNG, MINH DENIED LOCAL PRESS STORIES REPORTING THAT MINH HAD TOLD TRI QUANG AUGUST 13 HE

DECLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL

WOULD ESTABLISH AN OPPOSITION POLITICAL FORCE IF HE WITHDRAW AS A CANDIDATE OR WAS DEFEATED IN THE ELECTION.

4. THE COMMUNIQUE ENDED WITH "GENERAL MINH IS A CANDIDATE IN ORDER TO CHANGE THE PRESENT HARMFUL LEADERSHIP AND TO BRING PEACE TO THE FATHERLAND, AND CERTAINLY NEVER FOR MANEUVERING TO LEAD THE OPPOSITION UNDER ANYBODY'S ARRANGEMENT."

5. COMMENT: MINH'S MAKING A POINT OF DENYING THAT HE HAS ANY INTENTION OF LEADING AN OPPOSITION GROUPING MAY BE MERELY TO MAINTAIN WHAT HE REGARDS AS THE INTEGRITY OF HIS POSITION AS CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT AND SUSTAIN HIS CONTENTION THAT THE COUNTRY REQUIRES NEW LEADERSHIP AT THE TOP. HE MIGHT ALSO BE ANSWERING THOSE WHO ARE URGING HIM TO STAY IN THE RACE AND TAKE LEADERSHIP OF A RESPONSIBLE POLITICAL FORCE EVEN IF HE BELIEVES HE WILL NOT WIN.
BERGER

declassified